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RUEHGB/AMEMBASSY BAGHDAD 0036
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C O N F I D E N T I A L LISBON 000964

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 05/24/2016
TAGS: [MARR](#) [MOPS](#) [PREL](#) [PO](#) [IZ](#) [KG](#) [AF](#)
SUBJECT: PORTUGAL: MANAS AIRFIELD AND IRAQI CABINET SUPPORT
DEMARCHES DELIVERED

REF: A. SECSTATE 81543
[1](#)B. SECSTATE 81632

Classified By: Dana M. Brown, Pol-Econ Officer, Embassy Lisbon
Reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

[1](#)1. (C) Summary: On May 24, Pol/Econ Officer delivered reftels to MFA Director of Defense and Security Coordination Joao Corte-Real. He concurred with the U.S. concerns about Manas Airfield (ref A) and agreed to refer the matter to the Portuguese embassy in Moscow. With regard to Iraq (ref B), the MFA released a press statement on May 23 supporting the formation of the new Iraqi cabinet and congratulating the Iraqi people. Corte-Real added that Portugal planned to augment its presence in Iraq. End summary.

Portugal Shares Manas Airfield Concerns

[1](#)2. (C) Corte-Real stated that the GOP is fully supportive of the U.S. position on Manas Airfield and said Portugal would have difficulty with higher fees. Portugal currently has 178 troops stationed in Afghanistan, and recognizes that continued access to Manas Airfield is critical to maintaining stability in the region. (Note: Portugal's limited budget constrains most of its international engagements and a higher base access fee could impact on the number of Portuguese personnel stationed in Afghanistan.) Corte-Real said he would transmit the message to the Portuguese Embassy in Russia for further action.

Iraq: Portugal Supports New Cabinet and Anticipates Deeper Involvement

[1](#)3. (C) On May 23, the MFA released a press statement supporting the formation of the new Iraqi cabinet and congratulating the Iraqi people on this important step on the road to democratization. However, Iraq Desk Officer Fernando Brito specified on May 24 that Portugal has no plans for high level visits to Iraq at this time. With regard to training, Corte-Real noted that the GOP plans to host Iraqi officials for a training seminar. Brito added that the course would train 20 Iraqi police and 20 Iraqi prosecutors in investigational evidence processing in June as a part of an EU-sponsored rule of law series. Corte-Real also said the GOP had authorized three Portuguese trainers for Iraq training missions in addition to the six trainers already there.

[1](#)4. (C) Comment: Based on Corte-Real's and Brito's comments, Portugal is attempting to remain engaged in Iraq and Afghanistan reconstruction efforts on a very tight budget.

The addition of three trainers to Portugal's six already stationed in Iraq sends a clear message of the country's commitment in this arena. End comment.
Hoffman